

(Public) reactions to McNamara's Athens (May 5, 1962) and Ann Arbor (June 16, 1962) Speeches, Hiroshima Day, August 6, 2014 and related policy planning on West Berlin/Western Europe.

Alain C. Enthoven, "1963 Nuclear Strategy Revisited," in Harold P. Ford & Francis X. Winters, S.J., eds., *Ethics & Nuclear Strategy?*, Orbis Books, 1977: 72-82. Section entitled: "The Road To & From Ann Arbor," 75: Discusses McNamara's no-cities emphasis on military objectives, quoting from his Ann Arbor speech and then goes onto note: "It has often been noted that McNamara subsequently backed away from this idea, and I have frequently been asked why. I can offer only my personal interpretation. First, while the Ann Arbor address elicited some thoughtful comment, it also elicited some confused emotional responses. One powerful member of the Senate Armed Services Committee sharply criticized McNamara for showing a lack of resolve. Some thought that weakening the certainty of destruction of Soviet cities would make a nuclear attack on the United States attractive to the U.S.S.R.—despite our overwhelming nuclear superiority." (76) "As a practical matter, it was impossible to communicate a clear distinction between McNamara's view of deliberation, control, and "no cities" as a last desperate hope to make the best of a catastrophe, and General LeMay's view that we could fight and win a nuclear war...The Ann Arbor theme was too subtle an idea to be effective in the political arena."

Andreas Wenger, *Living With Peril: Eisenhower, Kennedy, & Nuclear Weapons*, Rowman & Littlefield, 1997: 190): "European criticism of the new emphasis on a conventional option for NATO spread quickly...European criticism reached a new level of intensity in the aftermath of McNamara's Ann Arbor speech (which was basically a declassified version of his Athens address)."

The Presidential Recordings, John F. Kennedy: *The Great Crises, July 30-August 1962*, Volume 1, edited by Timothy Naftali, New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2001, Miller Center for Public Policy; general editors, Philip Zelikow & Ernest May (311-312):

"The Kennedy administration's proposals to increase conventional forces in Europe to allow a more-measured escalation of conflict met with little enthusiasm from the Western allies when Secretary of Defense McNamara presented them at the NATO Conference in Athens, Greece, in May 1962. The strongest reaction came from French president Charles de Gaulle, who resented the implicit attack on national nuclear forces. British prime minister Harold Macmillan also favored a policy of relying on national nuclear forces but, anxious to preserve Britain's special relationship with Washington, was never as critical as the French. The West Germans objected to the new policy for different reasons. They believed that it would encourage the Soviets to grab as much German territory as possible while calculating at what point the United States would actually shift from a conventional to a nuclear response."

There follows a transcript of a meeting on Berlin, on **August 9, 1962**, including President Kennedy, John C. Ausland (State Department Representative to the Berlin Task Force, 1961-1964), McGeorge Bundy, Carl Kaysen, Robert McNamara, and Dean Rusk:

[317] **John Ausland:** "Now it's become evident in our quadripartite discussions that the U.S., U.K. France and Germany are in general agreement as to the preferred configuration of phase II. Particularly as we have examined the alternatives available in phases III and IV, it has been agreed that we should be prepared to use all measures short of force to reach an acceptable settlement during phase II...Plans have been prepared, for example, to go to the Security Council as soon as Soviet activity in the air corridors requires the introduction of fighters. This could be in phase I or phase II. We would at this point probably want to make unpublicized warnings to the Soviets as well as the satellites. We would, however, probably try to avoid a formal conference until the Soviets indicate a willingness to restore access...To make clear to the Soviets our intentions, determination and prepare for the possible failure of our combination of diplomatic and noncombatant pressures, there is quadripartite agreement that NATO should engage in a further military buildup or mobilization. There have, however, been no commitments on details on this.

[317-318] **Robert McNamara:** "May I interrupt just a moment, Mr. President, this is one of the weaknesses of our present plan: the lack of agreement on the extent and type of the schedule for mobilization in phase II. It depends to some degree on acceptance of the sequence of military operations for phases III and IV, and until we can get further agreement on phases III and IV, it's unlikely we can obtain any agreement on the type of mobilization for phase II. But I simply draw your attention to the fact that it doesn't exist at the present time and we will have to work toward it in the weeks ahead.

[318-319] **President Kennedy:** "What holds this...Now what is the difficulty of getting the planning on phase III?

**McNamara:** "Phase III. Well, it goes to phase IV, basically. There's still disagreement as to the character and timing of nuclear operations. Several of our allies believe they should occur earlier than we do in the sequence of military operations, and this of course affects the extent to which they would be willing to mobilize in phase II....

**President Kennedy:** "Where is the...Where do you have these discussions?

**McNamara:** In the quadripartite military subcommittee.

**President Kennedy:** Oh.

**Rusk:** Mr. President, I can't help but observe...I think that this difference, basically, though, is still a readiness in Europe to rely heavily upon the fact that if you threaten nuclear weapons nothing will happen...On the one side, they want you to [unclear] ahead of the event. [To] threaten immediate use of nuclear weapons, but when you get around to talking about what you actually do, then the Germans, for example say, "Well, let's go in with naval countermeasures at maximum risk" definitely rather than use military measures, than phase III.

[Discussion initiated by President Kennedy of leaked reports in the *New York Times* regarding U.S. discussions with West German defense minister Franz Joseph Strauss about how the U.S. never asked them to go to 750,000, to which McNamara responds that he only asked them to go over 500,000, but not 750,000.]

**President Kennedy:** Then I wonder who...that story this morning sounds like a very precise briefing.

**McNamara:** It couldn't have come from the Pentagon because there are only a hand[ful]...there are only three or four of us that know of this conversation—Roswell Gilpatric] and I and Paul [Nitze]. We're the only one's who know of it."

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[319-320] **President Kennedy:** Well, I suppose this is all really tied in because this article this morning, there's all this question of when, at what point to use nuclear weapons. Is there a basic, is this because they're unwilling to do the conventional [*unclear*] responsibility for us for...by our own insistence on building up conventional...[*unclear*] ruining the credibility of this really genuine feeling or is it just because they want to put—

**Rusk:** What they are worried about is that if we don't use nuclear weapons or make it highly likely that we would early, that the Soviets would grab off a considerable part of Germany and then want to negotiate at that point, holding onto...what they've got....

**President Kennedy:** But even with the use of nuclear weapons, I thought the conventional force level of 30 divisions is a...that force level was set on the presumption that you could use nuclear weapons quite early.

**Walter Dowling:** That's right.

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**Dowling:** "...Strauss would never really, or at least his military men would [never] accept that there's a concept that you really could carry on with conventional means for a very long period....

[321] **President Kennedy:** That's because they're unwilling, though...that's because they're unwilling to pay the price of the conventional buildup, isn't it?

**Dowling:** No, I think actually the Germans are doing about as much as anybody in Europe in the conventional field, by they wanted to tie it in very closely with the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Is this right, Bob?

**McNamara:** I would say, that it's the result of three differences in judgment, or what I would call them errors in judgment. One is an overestimation of the Soviet conventional capabilities...Secondly, they believe that there is a salvation in tactical nuclear weapons. I think part of this is a function of lack of understanding of the use of tactical nuclear weapons and the functions thereof.

And thirdly, an unwillingness to build to the conventional force limits they have agreed to in the NATO Councils. Now those three factors combined lead the to seek alternatives other than the use of conventional forces. So then I think we can attack all three of those problems and we have, and we are making some progress.

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[324] **Ausland:** "...Now this phase, or phase III, would mark the commencement of offensive, nonnuclear combat...At sea, quadripartite and NATO naval measures involving use of force, up to and including the worldwide blockade of the Soviet bloc....

[324] **Ausland** [continued]: "Phase IV, beginning in the U.S., first use of nuclear weapons in any form, follows phase III when it has become evident that the conventional measures which have been used have been unsuccessful in inducing the Soviets to restore allies rights to Berlin, and when conventional measures still in sign offer no reasonable prospect of success. BERCON BRAVO, SACEUR's plan for the demonstration use of a limited number of nuclear weapons, is the only Berlin contingency plan which is exclusively nuclear.

The other plans, however, include nuclear annexes for provision of the use of nuclear weapons. These would be implemented with presidential authority under any one of the following three circumstances: First, prior use by the enemy second, the necessity to avoid defeat of major military operations; or third, a specific political decision to employ nuclear weapons selectively in order to demonstrate the will and ability of the alliance to use them. In addition, depending upon the circumstances at the conclusion of phase III, phase IV could begin by direct recourse to general war.

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[328] **McNamara:** "...I said that I hope within the next four to six weeks that some of the mobilization questions will be advanced and answers will be developed within the quadripartite military subgroup. They're meeting continuously.

**President Kennedy:** I think that we ought to, if we can't seem to get an agreement on this question at what point we use our tactical weapons...and then they say that until we get an agreement on that, they won't go ahead with the divisions. It seems to me we ought to consider turning around and saying, "Well, we'll [unclear] your position on tactical [nuclear weapons] providing you will and the French and others will agree to a satisfactory buildup of forces because the 30 divisions assumed the use of tactical nuclear weapons almost immediately anyway.

**McNamara:** Yes, it did."

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[328-329] **McNamara:** "However, Mr. President, I'm afraid that if we say that we would consider the use of tactical [nuclear] weapons early, they'll then go on to say, and, of course, ... it's clear now that we don't need thirty divisions under those circumstances. This is the next move. [Henry] Kissinger makes this very clear, for example, in his July *Foreign Affairs* article, and I'm certain that this is an underlying belief in the minds of the Germans.

...

**President Kennedy:** "I completely agree that if you didn't have the problem of Berlin then you would say that they're right about this and then as the first Russian soldier comes across the West German border, then you'd consider using nuclear weapons. But given the problem over the probe into Berlin, and the fact that we would have to initiate it, and they have the forces up there, which may get involved in the fighting inside East Germany, that's what causes, it seems to me, our position of the use of nuclear weapons to have validity. Now, they don't agree with that? Even though...I think their position's not valid because of the Berlin corridor part of it.

**McNamara:** Well, as Secretary Rusk pointed out, they're quite unrealistic when they imply that nuclear weapons would be used very early without question, because the heads of government at that point would wish to seriously consider the alternatives in a way that those alternatives are not currently considered. There's no question in my mind but what that's true of the British. And yet the British representatives at various points in the military subgroup have talked as though they were strongly in favor of immediate use of nuclear weapons. I am positive, based on my own discussions with the British, that their government would take a different attitude when they reached that particular point in time.

[330] **Rusk:** "Mr. President, [unclear], they are hoping that nothing will happen and they won't have to pay the money for the additional [unclear]. Not this is just about what it amounts too.

**McNamara:** And there is still a lingering attachment to the old philosophy that if you simply threaten to use nuclear weapons, then the Soviets will be deterred from any military action or political aggression. And it's a combination of these two beliefs that leads them to the support of an immediate use of nuclear weapons.

**President Kennedy:** Yeah

**Carl Kaysen:** Their older concept is just more comfortable with...

**McNamara:** Yes.

...

**Bundy:** "They're...It's only a good thing to do if you're never going to do it."